2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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to this result is reprehensible in a husband. We are not certain whether the wife leaves her husband during every pregnancy or only for the first, but there is no doubt that abstinence should always be maintained during the later months of pregnancy and during lactation. At the time of birth the husband will make enquiries about his wife, but he must avoid the house of his parents-in-law.

An experienced woman assists the mother at birth; she cuts the umbilical cord with a sliver of millet stalk and buries the afterbirth [1] outside the hut on the right of the doorway. The place where the afterbirth is buried is not marked in any way, lest an evilly-disposed person might dig it up and burn it. The exact result of such an action was not discovered, but if menstrual blood were burned the woman from whom it had flowed would become sterile. Before the midwife allows the young mother to nurse her first child she has to make confession of all her previous love affairs, lest she and the child should die. The husband, who is told the names of his wife's previous lovers, as a rule makes no complaint, for the confession refers to the time before marriage.

The infant must be exhibited to the father and other men, who will gather outside the hut to ascertain that it is not a monorchid (p. 99) or deformed; in either event it would be thrown into the river, with, according to Hofmayr, a sheep as offering.[2] Except on this occasion the child is not taken out of the house during the first month of its life, and not often during the second month. At the birth of every child a goat is killed and the skin rubbed smooth to form a mat for the infant.

Names are given soon after birth and often refer to some incident that occurred in the family. If the father were to dream of an ancestor the child would be named after him, but this occurrence seemed comparatively rare. The birth name is retained throughout life, but Westermann states that a man often acquires a second name later, usually that of a cow or an ox.[3] According to Hofmayr, names play an important role in the life of a Shilluk, just as they do among the Dinka. A girl keeps her name for life, but a boy is continually adding names; they play the part of "decorations", he may take

[1] Hofmayr states that the mother ties the cord round her body (op. cit., 973); we suppose this to refer to the dry stump that later drops from the child's body.
[2] Op. cit., 976.
[3] Op. cit., 1000n. This obviously refers to the animal given to a lad by his father as manhood.

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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the king would generally be privy to the matter—always, it may be presumed, where rain was concerned—the actual killing being done by an *ajuago*; special virtue resides in the testes, and these, perhaps with other parts of the body, were buried in the track to water, i.e. to the river.[1] The procedure was the same, whether for rain or war.

The "medicine-men" of the Shilluk are of two kinds, the *ajuago* —literally "the man of Juok" (God)—the good medicine-man, who generally speaking works for the good of the community (though from the administrative standpoint his acts may be reprehensible), including the cure of the sick, and the evil medicine-man, the *jalyat*—literally "the man of herbs"—dealing essentially in black magic, or the satisfaction of private rather than public ends.

Typically, though not always, the *jalyat* is a monorchid, though men with double undescended testes or even unusually small glands tend to be regarded as such. The malignity attending this condition is so fully recognized that all such should be killed at birth; this can only be done by drowning, the victim being enclosed within a specially woven basket without which—such is its power—the infant would surely survive. A common practice of the *jalyat* is to work on parts of the body (hair, excreta, etc.) of the person to be injured, and the process is extended to include objects associated with the individual, e.g. a petticoat, or even a weapon (especially a club); or an effigy may be made, and heated or pierced to destroy the person it represents.

Certain women known as *daiyat*—recognized by their actions, especially do they speak enviously of others—are regarded as the feminine equivalent of the *jalyat*. The magic of the *daiyat* is associated with her belly; one mode of working evil is to urinate into a gourd and place this in the house of her victim. A *daiyat* has no difficulty in getting married, nor does she bring misfortune on her husband.

We are in doubt as to how far the evil eye (*yuop*) is associated with the *jalyat*, though it is certain that not all having the evil eye are monorchids or even of the male sex. The power of the evil eye —largely, though not necessarily, hereditary—is perhaps the other most common cause of illness and is met by sympathetic magic:—

"When a medicine man undertakes to cure a case of the evil eye, he aims to . . . cure the person suffering, and . . . to put that particular charmer . . . out of business. A sheep is brought, and the medicine man heats a nail red-hot. With the nail he blinds the sheep. He then tells the patient that he

[1] Op. cit., 134-6.

754 If a man knows that he is being bewitched he can get the witchdoctor to counteract the bad magic and save him. When he gets old the sorcerer may hire out his powers to help people.(1) It is a serious offence to accuse a man of being a sorcerer unless it can be proved, and an accuser [683] may be heavily fined. A sorcerer must be caught in the act if he is to be legitimately killed.

The Daiyet

Daiyet appear to be the feminine equivalents of the *jalyet*. They are not regarded as being so evil and serious in intent as the *jalyet*.

The Evil Eye (Yeup)

The Shilluk believe firmly in the power of the evil eye and that it is inherited, passing from a parent (male or female) to the children. It may also come suddenly upon a person. Those who possess it try to conceal the power from others.(2) Envy, jealousy or anger causes people with this power to bring illness or misfortune on others who are richer and more fortunate than themselves. The *ajuogo* can counteract the effects of the evil eye by prayer, sacrifice and countermagic.(3)

LIFE CYCLE

BIRTH

844 About three months before her first child is born, a woman leaves her husband and returns to her parents' *gol* for the birth.(4) Immediately after the birth the mother is exhorted to confess all her previous love affairs to the woman acting as midwife and it is believed that were she not to do so she and the baby would die. The child is shown to the father [847] and his friends who wish to see that it is not a monorchid or deformed in any way. In the former case, the child would probably be killed, for it is believed that monorchids grow up to be sorcerers.(5) Cleansing cere-846 monies are carried out a few days after birth. It is considered wrong to 842 have another child before the previous one has been weaned.

845 Twins are welcomed by the Shilluk. They are called *nwole juok* 'children of god' and have special names. Many ceremonies occur after the birth of twins.

563 Names are given soon after birth and usually refer to some incident which has occurred in the family. The birth name is retained throughout life, although an ex-name and other names are taken later.

DEATH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES

774 According to Seligman every living man has both a *wei* and a *tipo*. The *wei* is breath or life, the *tipo*, shadow or image. In addition, the

(1) Oyler, *S.N.R.* Vol.II, 1919, No.2, p.123. (2) *Ibid.*
(3) Hofmayr, *Die Schilluk*, 1925, p.221. (4) *Ibid.*, p.271.
(5) Seligman, *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan*, 1932, p.78.

8:Howell E-4,5 (1937, 1948) 1953 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

thing

One other offence which is recognised by the Shilluk and is also known to Nuer and Dinka is *thing*. This refers to fornication with a woman who is pregnant or nursing. Should the woman abort the child, or the child die subsequently, four head of cattle are claimed. This applies, of course, only to married women and in effect means that a man must pay four head of cattle for adultery where in other circumstances he would only pay two.

Sexual Offences Concerning Female spirits

It is a rigid rule among the Shilluk that no female *spirit*[1] may marry or indeed have sexual relations with any man. It is possible that in the past they were more strictly guarded and deterrents in the form of severe punishment were more rigidly applied.

Seligman says,

> ... the daughters of a king must remain unmarried, the alleged reason for this being that it is unfitting that the daughter of a king should marry a commoner, while she could not marry a *nimer* (king's son) since this would be incest. The prohibition of marriage does not, however, extend to all intercourse; a king's daughter is allowed to select lovers as she chooses, and nothing is said so long as it is not publicly known that she has become pregnant; but if this were discovered she would be killed, as would also the man responsible for her condition. This rule, which until recently appears to have been sternly carried out, led to frequent production of abortion.[2]

This rule is still insisted on by the *reth*, though clearly it is ineffective nowadays since *spirits* have become something of a problem to the Administration. Writing in 1946, Thomson says that female *spirits* can be divided into two classes: (*a*) those who cohabit with Police and 'Malakia' (detribalized urban elements) and (*b*) those who live in Shilluk country.

> The former class appears to be numerous, and has gained notoriety owing to its pursuing its trade largely in Malakal. I believe it forms a small minority of female *spirits*. Some of them live faithfully with their unmarried husbands, others are more flighty and others again are prostitutes. As long as these *spirits* remain in Malakal or Kodok they are merely objectionable on moral grounds.
>
> The latter class is a menace to tribal society. Their habits are similar to the female *spirits* who connect with 'Malakia', but in this case the 'husband', being of Shilluk blood, feels bound by tribal custom and its distortions. The tribal custom appears to be that the first time a female *spirit* becomes pregnant the lover has to pay ten head of cattle (*dow*) to the *reth*. In the old days it was held to be a disgrace for a female *spirit* to give birth and abortion was frequently practised. The ten head of cattle to the *reth* would not be objectionable, if it could be looked on as bride-price (which it is not). If this were so, the *reth* would have a personal interest in the fidelity of the *spirit*, as the bride-price would, of course, be returnable on divorce. It would be right that this bride-price should go to the *reth* as being either father of the girl or in loco parentis.
>
> This custom has, I think, largely fallen into contempt and I doubt whether the number of cattle reaching Fashoda amounts to very much. This does not mean that the lot of the

[1] *Nyiroth*, daughter or son of a *reth*.

[2] Seligman, e.g. 'The Cult of Nyakang and the Divine Kings of the Shilluk'. *Report of the Wellcome Tropical Research Laboratories*, Khartoum, 1911, p. 218.

11; Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

II. — THE EVIL MEDICINE MAN.

The Shilluks believe that occult power of a malignant nature is possessed by a certain class of men. The man with this power is called *jal yat* (the first *a* as in hat, the second, as *a* in father and the *t* is a dental). It means the man of the tree, or medicine, as *yat* means either a tree, or the injuring or healing powers of certain compounds, which are usually derived from trees. 754 [192]

The men of this class are all born with the distinguishing mark. Three different marks divide them into three divisions. The first have but one testicle showing in the scrotum; the second have two, but they are very small, and the third have none. The first class is the more numerous, and are the dominating class. The members of the first and second class are supposed to be equal in the manifestation of their powers, but the third are more powerful. 754 826

Children born marked as evil medicine men are thrown into the river at birth, which is called sending them to their own country. The father alone has the power to spare his son in such a case. 845 [847]

The young wife always returns to her own home to give birth to her first child. After that she may either remain in the house of her husband, or go to her old home, but in either case a few hours after the child is born a number of men come to the door of the house and sit down. If the husband is in the village, he is one of the number. If it is in the women's house, her relatives go through this formality. The men say: "What is it?". If the women within reply "a boy", the men then ask: "Is it good?". If the women reply immediately "it is good", the men go away happy, but if the women hesitate or answer: "It is bad", the men go in to investigate. If they find that the child is an evil medicine man, they immediately begin to go through certain forms. When the child is born in the wife's old home, a messenger must be sent off to the father. Should the messenger merely say that a son has been born, and not tell of his deformity the husband can recover part of the cattle he has paid for his wife, and his relatives-in-law become responsible for any damage the child may do. When the father is told that the child is bad, he usually says it must be killed. He [844] 672 845 847

11: Cyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

672 845 847 fears to trust his relatives-in-law lest they yield to the pleadings of the mother, and so he sends a messenger to see that the child is killed. Should the father permit the child to live, he is responsible for all the evil done by him. If the father is present, he gives immediate judgment, and if it is for death, the sentence is carried out immediately.

835 847 The helpless child is always killed in a certain way. A little basket is woven, and the child placed within, and then the top is also woven shut. The basket is then put in a boat, and taken to the middle of the river, where it is committed to the water. The basket is a necessity, as they think that the powers of the babe are such that without the basket to restrain him he would immediately swim ashore, and escape.

842 845 When the evil medicine man is not killed, his mother loses the power to become a mother again, and when she weeps for the death of the little one, her next child will be deformed in the same way.

682 If the father spares the child, and someone else kills it, the murderer must suffer the usual punishment for murder, which can usually be atoned for by a fine.

751 627 683 After an evil medicine man has reached maturity, he can not be openly killed except under certain conditions. The people of his village may tire of his evil practices and conspire to kill him accidentally. To accomplish that end they invite him to join them in the chase, and they manage to get him well to the front. When he is in the right position, they all throw at the animal, but he is their *real* target. When he falls, the men all cry out: "an accident", and no one is responsible for his death. They do not seek to kill such a person in their local fights lest their own side be thrown into disorder.

751 This occult power is not hereditary, but many think that the mother of *an evil medicine man* has some occult power, if her husband is not of that class. She does not work as the men do, and the majority seem to think that such a mother is not tainted.

The evil medicine man always works on his own initiative and never at the request of another, and for that reason he never receives fees. He uses as his tools, owls, snakes, eggs, sodom apples, lizards, and crows. The medicine or power in these agents is the same as the power belonging to the man, and in action unite with his power to work evil.

11: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918)1919 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

As a class they are without mercy, and do not intercede for the children, who are killed. However, if an evil medicine man has a son afflicted in a like manner, he spares his life. They try to keep people ignorant of the fact that they have the evil power, and when someone mentions the work of the evil medicine man in the presence of one of the class, he usually says «why are they so evil?». 7 54 [6 83] [8 45 8 47]

They belong to the dark as they always work at night, and when one is seen casting his charm on the house of another, if he tries to run away he may be killed, and no punishment is inflicted on the murderer; but if he is caught, and held, and then killed, the murderer is fined. If he is caught, he must pay a fine as though he had killed a man. It is very difficult to hold them, as they blind their captors temporarily by throwing some medicine in their eyes. 6 83 7 64

The statement is made that they usually try to cast their charms on houses where people are sick, and that accounts for some of their apparently wonderful achievements. This statement is also borne out by one case at the mission. The calves had been dying from some disease. One night an evil medicine man came, and made a great hole in the mud wall of the barn. Some object, perhaps a snake, had been dragged among the calves, and sticks were placed in a certain manner in front of the opening. The herder was in great distress, as he was sure all of the calves would die, but not another one died from that disease. 7 54

The people firmly believe in this black art, and apparently in many cases at least the victims believe themselves possessed of this power. They go out into a desert place at night, and pray thus: «You, who are God give me this person to kill. Why was I created thus if it was not that I was to kill?» If he does not succeed at the first attempt, he tries till he is successful. Their belief in their own powers is also shown by the fact that the little boys of this class work charms on their little play fellows, apparently practicing their powers. Perhaps the child has heard much of his own evil powers, and he desires to learn whether or not he can do the wonderful things attributed to him, and as he tries he becomes convinced of his own power. [7 82]

To call a man a *jal gut* is a serious matter even though it is a well known fact that he has the power. The person making the statement must 6 83 7 54

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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dowry. The models are hung up in front of the hut and the ceremony is concluded with beer-drinking.

About a month later the child may be taken home to be shown to its father. The mother carrying the infant is accompanied by three or four girl friends and the old woman who attended her at the confinement. The father and his male relatives and friends inspect the baby outside the hut to satisfy themselves that it shows no deformity or any other abnormality. If such unhappily were the case, the child would be enclosed together with a live sheep in a basket and thrown into the Nile. When the father is satisfied that the child is normal, a goat or sheep is killed, the meat eaten at the ensuing feast and the skin scraped and softened to serve as a sleeping mat for the baby. Beer is prepared and the whole village invited to come to the party. Those who come, however, are expected to bring some small gifts of money, beads, bracelets and the like. These are the perquisites of the midwife, the beer makers and the girls who escorted the mother and child back to her home.

There are no special ceremonies for the birth of children after the first born, and the mother may or may not return to her father's village for her confinements as she pleases. There is however a little feast to celebrate the birth and, as before, a sheep or goat is killed and the skin used as the infant's sleeping mat.

During a woman's pregnancy neither she nor her husband is permitted to visit anyone who is sick. They are considered to be unlucky and their visit to a sick person would surely result in his death. The most that is allowed is that they may stand at the fence surrounding the house where the sick person is and enquire after him.

With reference to the custom of the young wife leaving her husband's home for her father's for the birth of her first child, it must be mentioned that the wives of the king, not merely on the occasion of their first born, but for all subsequent confinements, must leave Fashoda. They do not go to their former home, however, but to the village of some chief at a considerable distance from the capital. The child that is